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The Recapture of Order

Some Historical Reflections for Rebels of the Right

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OF the four Revolutions that have resulted in the world in which we live the first was religious, the second intellectual, the third political and the last economic. They have corresponded, roughly, to four fundamental and distinguishable appetites of human nature: the cravings of the soul for Peace, of the mind for Light, of the will for Justice, of the body for material Comfort. Taken together, Luther, Montaigne, Robespierre, and Marx fought, or at least felt they were fighting, for all that we men most want—a Faith, a Philosophy, a measure of Freedom, and Food.

And yet, there is said to be a fifth revolution brewing amongst us—a Revolt against the Revolutions. One fears of Rebels of the Right.

To a philosopher, *a priori*, this new fact might seem impossible; since the major appetites, like the correlative faculties, are limited to four. It must be that the new revolution corresponds to all four cravings taken together. Or it may be that it is really a *rebellio*, in the literal sense: a renewal of war by a conquered people." A Renewal, at any rate, and not a Denial; specifically, a renewal of the whole of human living on all its levels, and not a denial of any of its parts or possibilities.

And thereby hangs a tale; that is, an historical context. Hence the following reflections; which, however, are offered hesitatingly by one whose place, in a philosophical symposium, is at the end of the table.

I

Metahistoric

"History," Lord Acton once said, "should be, not a burden on the memory, but an illumination of the soul." And yet, it is not easy to be both learned and luminous. How is one to reduce the Many of the historical flux to the One of philosophical conception? By what alchemy of the mind is one to transmute the dross of deeds and dates into the gold of general ideas, to transform the phantasm of the past into *species intelligibilis*?

The problem is an old one. When a nineteenth century historian proposed the formula: "*Valeur, conquêtes, luxe, anarchie—voilà le cercle fatal de l'histoire de tous les empires*," (Bravery, conquest, luxury, anarchy—such is the fatal circle of the history of every empire,) he was

answering a question that had been asked in the age of Polybius; and when the eighteenth century began to talk of the "philosophy of history," it was going back, if not for the word, at least for the thought, to the *City of God*.

Every one knows St. Augustine's solution. He reduces the history of humanity to a tale of two cities. "Two cities," (his famous formula runs), "two cities made by love, the one earthly, fashioned by selfishness in contempt of God, the other celestial, wrought by selflessness in love with God." *Fecerunt itaque civitates duas amores duo; terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei, celestem vero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui*.¹ He gives these cities names: Jerusalem and Babylon; although the names are merely mystical symbols—*mystice appellamus civitates duas*—metahistorical formulae for the seemingly unending conflict between the ideal of natural and supernatural Order and the reality of ethical and social Confusion. Jerusalem, he further explains, "is predestined to triumph eternally with God"; Babylon is "foredoomed to go to the devil."²

This last observation might seem to make the Augustinian formula less immediately available for the purely positivistic Humanist, who is seeking, it may be supposed, rather historical induction than theological eschatology.

II

The Algebra of History

Still both Jerusalem and Babylon are needed even in the Humanist philosophy of history. Only, you must add Athens and Rome. Our Western history then becomes a tale of four cities. The cities are still symbols; but rather algebraic than mystical, anagogic, metahistorical.

For there is an algebra of history as well as historical arithmetic. Besides the history you get by the recording of names and events in a book, like numbers in a ledger, there are the tendencies, movements, larger curves that can only be recorded like graphs and written in equations. If it is one part of the duty of the historian to deal with the facts, it is no less his business to give us formulae. He ought in a way to solve equations, to determine, for particular situations in time and space, the values of three variables which might be written as *x* and *y* and

z, but which correspond to three orders of reality, the natural, the human, the supernatural, or, if you like, the material, the mental, the mystical. For the moment, it must be enough to propose a formula.

III

Jerusalem, Babylon, Athens, and Rome

Whenever I try to express my own "burden on the memory" as an "illumination of the soul," to reduce the facts as I know them to a manageable formula, these four Cities come to mind. For between them they stand for all that Western man (speaking historically) has been, has done, has needed, and has striven for. They represent, symbolically, algebraically, four traditions that have survived all partial revolutions, four walls that have withstood all ravages, four foundations that have remained under every ruin. Taken together they recall the inevitable and irrepressible Renewal that has always stirred whenever the storm of Denial has passed. They are the expression of four ideals which taken together make up integral historical Life, and which taken separately (and putting Babylon last) may be distinguished as Religion, Culture, Civilization, and Comfort. It comes to the same thing to say that they stand for Peace, Light, Justice, and Food; or, more fundamentally, for the seats of those appetites: the Soul, the Mind, the Will, the Senses. More elaborately, you may say they sum up the spiritual, intellectual, political, and economic aspects of our social and ethical evolution.

At any rate, what gives unity and continuity to Western history is this, that men have been constantly engaged in devising new Programs, including some or all of these ideals, to deal with the old Problems of setting in Order our society and souls, of securing, inwardly and outwardly, in our institutions and ideas, some sort of Harmony, based on some type of Hierarchy that ends in some more or less ultimate Hegemony.

We see this readily enough when we pass from the outward history of social institutions to the inner lives of individual and characteristically Western men—Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Augustine, Boethius, Dante. Whatever may be the story of their conduct, of their sins or "missing the mark," and whatever the variety of their philosophic vocabulary, they have this in common that they are ever striving for some inner harmony, equilibrium, balance, poise, peace, measure, music or whatever other name you may give to Order. And meanwhile their minds keep working—intuitively, dialectically, or inductively—to determine the essential hierarchy, scale, system, constitution, inter-relation of parts in the human whole. And they all reach in the course of experience and reflection some perception of hegemony, primacy, ultimacy.

IV

Pax Romana

This law of harmony through hierarchy and hegemony has its application no less in outward history. You have only to think of the phenomenon we call the *Pax*

Romana. There literally, and not merely symbolically you had the fusion of Jerusalem, Babylon, Athens, and Rome. And those who knew Rome best and loved her most felt that—apart from her peculiar genius in the art of peace—she was the meeting point of all that was wise and good and rich and strong in earlier but less embracing creeds, codes, cultures, and civilizations. No one, for example, can read the *Aeneid* without feeling how conscious Virgil was that to Rome belonged the whole inheritance of the past, whether of Asia, Africa, or Europe. One has only to think of the multiple marriages and varied ancestry of Aeneas—Creusa and Assaracus from Asia, Dido and Electra from Africa, Lavinia and Dardanus from Italy.

And what is true of Augustan Rome is truer still of the Empire in the age of Augustine. Jerusalem had now given Christianity, and with it the *beata Pacis visio* of the heavenly Jerusalem; *di quella Roma*, as Dante was later to sing, *onde Cristo è Romano*⁸ (of that Rome whereof Christ is a Roman). Athens had given Hellenism. Babylon had contributed carpets and all manner of bodily comforts. And New Rome; the city of Constantine, was still swaying the world with an ecumenical political authority. There were troubles of course in those days, as, let us say, a man like Gregory of Nazianzen knew too well. And yet you have only to read the letters and speeches of a man like that to feel to the full the amplitude of Humanistic opportunity offered by the *Pax Romana* of the fourth century. The style of his prose has the swing of his Cappadocian temperament, the refinements of Greek rhetoric, and an energetic brevity that is typically Roman. The range of his interests is enormous—from the subtlest points of metaphysical theology, through strong and even bitter invective, to the tenderest of emotions in regard to his friends and relations. He writes prose and verse with apparently equal ease; and when he exhausts all metres known to classical models he ventures on the new experiment of finding rhythm in accent. Sometimes you think of him, in some of his moods, as an ascetic and a mystic; and yet he was a man of will and action and wide experience. He had been educated in Asia, Africa, and Europe, in Caesarea, Alexandria, and Athens; disciplined by the profession of teaching and by the practice of monastic life; experienced in the practical work of ecclesiastical administration; and finally, invited to take care of the Church in the Capitol of the world. Before he died he had taken charge of an ecumenical Council.

When one recalls that the fourth century *Pax Romana* made possible the even fuller lives of many in the galaxy of his contemporaries—Athanasius of Alexandria, Cyril of Jerusalem, Basil of Caesarea, Gregory of Nyssa, Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose of Milan, Jerome of Pannonia, Chrysostom of Antioch, Augustine, and a host of hardly less celebrated men, one feels that for the time at least the world had been made safe for Humanism.

V

The Medieval Synthesis

We say Rome fell—as we might say that Aristotle fell sick. An irruption of bacilli; a break down of life; a high fever; prostration; no possibility of creative work. But the patient recovered, slowly and surely. We talk in the text books of the Carolingian renaissance, the Ottonian renaissance, or the twelfth century renaissance, and even of the Renaissance; as though something of Western history could die and come to life again; as though Clio were a worker of miracles, a priestess administering a species of sacramental “regeneration.” Better say: Rome fell sick—and recovered.

There had been much devastation. But after Conquest, Darkness, Might, and Famine, men—for, of course, they were *men*; and if you must know, that is Clio's innermost secret—men wanted Peace, Light, Right, and Food. They wanted these things in them and all about them. And so they began to rear, amid the ruins, a new and now Gothic construction of ethical and social order. The simple truth is that the old Temple had been badly battered; but the plan had not been lost. You may pull down *things* and institutions, but *thoughts* and traditions remain—in the inviolable recesses of the soul. And when the storm passes they issue forth and begin to work. Amid havoc however great there is always, in those deep recesses, the murmuring echo of Tertullian's advice: *Unam omnium rempublicam agnoscimus mun-*
tem. There is always some one who remembers: “Aeneas was our King and none more just, more dutiful, more powerful in war and arms.”

*Rex erat Aeneas nobis, quo iustior alter
nec pietate fuit nec bello maior et armis.*

When the Gothic Cathedral finally took its place on the ruins of the Roman Temple, the old plan was quite apparent. *Sacerdotium, Imperium, Studium, Civitas*—Papacy, Empire, Gown, and Town. It is Jerusalem, Rome, Athens, and Babylon over again. Institutionally the scheme is four-square. It is so when you pass from institutions to ideas, from visible and organized powers to the hierarchy of values and accepted authorities. *Fides, Ratio, Lex, Mos*—Faith, Reason, Law, and Custom. They make you think of the Temple, the Stoa, the Forum, and the Medes and the Persians—the Authorities of Jerusalem, Athens, Rome, and Babylon. Hence it is quite easy to state the central problem and programme of the Middle Ages. It was an effort to establish a harmony between four great Powers—the Church, the State, the University, and the Commune, on the basis of an acknowledgeable hierarchy of Authorities—Revelation, Reason, Right, and Common Sense. Over all was the hegemony of God.

VI

Dante

No one will pretend that the Middle Ages solved completely and in a practical way its ecclesiastical, political, economic, or social problems. It is more important to know

what success there was in the intellectual and ethical problems. This much is certain that the genuine medieval Humanist speaks with an extraordinary assurance about his inner life. With vigor and precision he affirms and distinguishes his faculties—Spirit, Mind, Will, and Appetite; and in spite of some protests from mystics on the one side and Manichaeans on the other, he sets about to put those powers in Order. He discusses; but he does not deny, denounce, disguise, or minimize any part of his whole humanity. If he seems at times to be giving to the dialectical intellect an unbecoming pre-eminence, and to the appetites (or passions) a halting recognition, that is merely because he is insisting that harmony between these functions must follow the hierarchy of their respective purposes. He puts the purpose, and therefore the “rights” of the intellect very high; and the purpose, and therefore the “rights” of his passions rather low. Still his total aim was harmony, equilibrium, balance, poise.

Dante is the supreme medieval Humanist; and if we remember most his famous “And in God's Will, man finds his Peace,”

*E'n la sua Volontade è nostra Pace,*⁴

he was not less medieval when he said “I feel myself four-square to all the blows of Fortune.”

*... mi senta
ben tetragono ai colpi di ventura.*⁵

Tetragono. Four-square, Medievalism and Humanism are both in that word. It implies, if you like, an architectural conception of life. It implies Order.

VII

The Four Revolutions

Then came the Revolutions. They had their positive sides, of course, their partial legitimacy. We all want the things that Luther, Montaigne, Robespierre, and Marx talked about. We want Faith, Reason, Right, and Bread. Only we do not want them one by one. We want them all together—and in Order, in harmony and hierarchy, and not in a jumble.

But the fact is that until the other day we were a conquered people. It turns out that the four revolutions were Invasions, in disguise. The tale has often been told (sometimes with a good deal of passion, controversy, and even insincerity). It need not be repeated here. This much may be said, however, that as things (and thoughts) now are, at the end of four centuries of Denials, we are more aware of Confusion than of Order, of Babylon (in the Augustinian sense) than of any *beata Pacis visio*. One feels that one has lost something, and also lost the way. We feel, a little like Dante in the days of his aberrations, that we have lost our way in a Dark Wood.

*Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
chè la diritta via era smarrita*⁶

VIII

Rebels of the Right

That I take it is the context of the present Renewal. “A Renewal of War,” a *rebellio*, if you like; only a war against the Invaders; a Recovery of lost ground; a Re-

covery of the missing parts of our Soul; a Restoration, putting things back where they belong; best of all, perhaps, what a Latin would have called a *Redintegratio*, making things once more Whole. One last alternative: *The Recapture of Order*. Meanwhile, as a manual for the New Rebels I recommend the *Divine Comedy*; where one may learn that all things (and thoughts) are part of one great Order, which is the Form that makes the World and Man like God.⁷

REFERENCES

¹ *De Civitate Dei*, Bk. XIV, chap. 28.

² *Ibid.*, XVII, 16.

³ *Purgatorio*, XXXII, 102.

⁴ *Paradiso*, III, 85.

⁵ *Ibid.*, XVII, 24.

⁶ *Inferno*, I, 2-3.

⁷ *Paradiso*, I, 103-5.

America In Nineteen Thirty-Five

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DURING the past four hundred years the typical American has believed that this land is an inexhaustible mine of wealth. His dream, so aptly stated by James Truslow Adams in *The Epic of America*, was always realistic, and up to the closing of the frontier in 1890 no one questioned the unbounded bounty of the country. It was truly, as Leo XIII said of the earth in his famous *Rerum Novarum*, a storehouse whence man might draw all his sustenance in peace and liberty.

Then came the disillusionment to the young nation as the tightening of limits set in and men found themselves unable to escape beyond their frontiers. Slowly the dream began to vanish. Conditions were changing. Blindly the boom forces moved onward, those forces that once had promised nothing but blessing for the citizens of a happy land, yet now were overreaching themselves and would soon bring down the whole economic structure crashing about them. And at the end of that epoch, in our today, many feel that we have reached an impasse, a barrier to our economic, governmental, spiritual life. A new situation confronts us. We are grown up as a nation, but we grew up in a historic period whose movements gyrated in contrary circles. The claims of rational living are fought by the Machine, by Nationalism, by Marxism, by literary discontent, by the advancing separation from religious motive. America needs readjustment.

The process by which this people has come of age is interesting and very instructive to an inquirer into the Radical Right. What elements have entered the compound of our national life? Have we a unity, a culture, a philosophy? This much is true, that of the great peoples of the world we are unique. Every other group has its roots far back in ancient or medieval times, and Christopher Dawson has shown that land and religion are the bases of historic cultures. Here things are different. While the units that made our people were all of old stock, still when they came to these shores they lifted themselves out of their native habitat and set out to form a New World. Another race was born.

It was a hardy set of men who dared the wilds and the

vast ocean to found America. First came the Sons of Spain. They discovered, plotted the ways, chose the ground, set up their commonwealths. And they did more than exploit their colonial holdings. They settled down to live, millions of them, in the years from 1492 to 1800 when they lost their hold on their vast possessions. They built great cities, schools, systems of social service. Some say they attempted too much, though they left a permanent mark on everything from Florida and California to Tierra del Fuego.

Frenchmen soon followed them, first of all to unstable sites in Georgia and the Atlantic littoral of South America and then to their enduring headquarters at Quebec, just one year after Jamestown. They roamed the wide inland plains of the North and the Mississippi Valley, and fixed a lasting character along the St. Lawrence watershed. From the West they went, and as early as 1709 they were warring with the Spanish outpost at Santa Fe. They gained the solid allegiance of the Indian and treated him well. Like the men of Spain, they kept a fixed colonial policy in land and Indian relations.

Luckiest of all were the Anglo-Saxons, who took what was left over and built in the swamps of Virginia and the rocky coast of New England. No clear policy governed the rulers of these colonists. No strong monarch gave them a set of *Leyes de las Indias*. No *Casa de Contratacion* ordered their business. No *Patronato Real* set limits or spurs to their religious activity. They were, for the most part, left alone to make their way against the stubborn soil and the Indian whose friendship they generally alienated. But in spite of their lack of policy, of subvention from home, lack of plan and far-sighted air they moved slowly, surely, across the breadth of the land. On their borders they encountered the frontiers of South and North, borderlands that modified their progress and social life.

One excellent trait shines out through all their religious intolerance and divergent effort, and that is the welcome they gave to other races. Hostility to Catholicism was bred in their bones and it took many decades to soften

antipathy; but toward Germans and Irish, French and Spanish, Bohemian and Jew, and stranger of every kind they offered a haven from the crowding and oppression of cross old Europe. The *Knights of Columbus Historical Series* tells in cold statistic how the strength of every people was added to the infant power of the colonial foundation.

The frontier advance of the American is an epic tale. The grand discoveries and discoverers, scouring the lakes and rivers, riding the plains, through forests, over mountains—the picture of the Spaniard atop a western height peering with his broad gesture from point to point across the horizon and claiming it all for his “grant”; or of LaSalle’s herculean labors on the Ohio, the Lakes, the Mississippi, and over the ocean to return through the Gulf of Mexico with a new colony into Texas; of the more colorful yet equally important tramps and scoutings and gains of Daniel Boone or George Croghan—all this is stamped on our character, and more.

We must become a nation. It is in Philadelphia, in 1776. For decades now the thirteen mainland colonies of the English have expanded their forms and strengthened their sinews in the steady pressure of youthful growth. They have gained a population and a wealth that gives them confidence. Their Mother Country looks askance at their independent bearing. She seeks to bind them more closely to herself in a series of “Intolerable Acts.” They take a step, assert their full independence, and emerge as one of the self-sufficient peoples of the world.

Nature’s goodness and men of forethought urged on the infant society to expansion and organic complexity. Hardly was the Revolution on the way when boatmen began to run the rivers beyond the Appalachians. Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio attracted thousands whose narrow lives impelled them to hunt new openings. France gave us the Mississippi for a song, and men like Boone, Dodge, the Austins pushed through to the Great Plains. Meantime the American System, epitomized by Clay in his 1824 speech, helped on the merchant marine to the great days of the forties, and built up the factories of New England and the farming of the West. Money was easy; dreams were broad. Gold was found and attracted thousands, while more thousands rushed to the green gold of the Oregon fields and the Missouri basin. James K. Polk expressed the feeling of his day in the slogan of the 1844 campaign, the boastful claim of the fast-growing boy: “Fifty-four forty or fight!”

But the early, simple unity began to suffer strain, for the American System held within itself the causes for the internal struggle that was soon to come. East opposed West on the score of loan terms and government bonds. Northern white labor stood confronted by slavery below the Line, a barrier to advancement. The tariff divided the industrial from the agricultural sections, and would have meant the country permanently had not the West remained loyal to its governmental parent who had given it the

National Domain for a home and practiced paternalism as blatantly as ever in our history. Even so, the strain between the two sectional cultures, the Northern leveling, pragmatic, mercantile life, and the Southern aristocratic, slave society, finally plunged us into the Tragic Era. The conflict was waged on burning issues, but they were temporary, and the issue welded the people into a political oneness that augured perpetuity. The deep wounds healed, due to generous tolerance and native power of recovery, and the nation went on to manhood.

A reconstructed people soon found themselves embarking on the modern program. The Machine had been with them for fifty years, since Fitch and Whitney. Now the Trust began. Men found out how to correlate wide holdings and multiple energy into giants of economic action. The oil, the bank, the railroad, the harvester companies: such were the leaders of the New Age. Immense wealth came and offered new fields for labor and for investor energies. The boundaries of the country could not halt the vision of the planners, and men like Vanderbilt went to Hispanic America for a fortune. Time came when the President of the nation felt called on to take Panama. He said: “I took it,” but he added the significant explanation: “You can’t nail currant jelly to a wall.” Is this, and similar acquisition, imperialism? The question is futile—men wrangle so over definitions—though surely Americans have never desired to hold sovereignty over other peoples.

The United States now found itself not alone independent and united in internal life. It had become one of the largest and most important groups of men in the world, and its physical strength came to be regarded with extreme care by foreign rulers. Unfortunately one set of rulers felt called upon to neglect that power, and we were drawn into the World War.

Who can count the cost of that tremendous war? The more than five hundred billions of wealth literally blown into the skies, the twenty millions of the best young men violently taken out of life, the inequality of the settlement, the subsequent questioning of its value, as of the battle of Blenheim: “It was a famous battle, and what came of it?”

Something did come, and that something is with us today. The war accelerated enormously the effect of world forces that came into being in the nineteenth century. Machines and inventors ran ahead of consumptive power. War psychology increased speculation, and ragged morality, and impoverishment, impoverishment especially of the spirit. For to many the war was a test to see who would *survive*, who were the *fit*, and Nationalism led men to pride themselves on their *fitness* in victory. Most striking of all, because most palpable—men generally notice most what their senses apprehend—was the long line of unemployed, of men who wanted to work, who were as honest and thrifty as the rest who were employed, millions

of these men were now denied a chance to earn a living because of the uncontrolled forces of production.

Observers see a more serious problem. A new paganism has taken hold of men, with its characteristic mark of pessimism. The decline of Evangelical Protestantism in this country has weakened the spirit of obedience and self-control. Everything now is wrong and out of joint to them. The joyousness of our national youth has been supplanted by the ogre spirit of men like Waldo Frank, who would turn whole nations into a shambles of chaos in the hope that out of a new primeval, shapeless mass would come a new creation at the hands of evolutionary Nature. The cult of the nudist is another sign, and the cult of Unreason, seen in the low level of advertising, in much recent philosophy, in literary criticism, in the wish to destroy all government-by-consent and substitute the

force of the Superman in a Communist society, in the refusal to be logical, in the widespread search for thrill and speed and luxurious comfort to the abandonment of calm and peace and contentment.

The psychologist might say it is all a case of adolescent scepticism. The realist and statesman see here a practical question that must be solved. The historian sees in America the child of modern history, with no roots in the deep past but nurtured only on modernities, on the negations of thought, the trust in Science as the Orderer of everything, the denial of the concept of authority or of right in State or Church, the whirling along on products of the Machine Age in a perpetual state of excitement. The French in 1789 attempted to build a new calendar and an era divorced from anything in the past. They have abandoned that effort. What will America do?

The Philosophy Behind the New Deal

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ONE might easily be deterred from an examination of the philosophical implications of the New Deal on the grounds that, at least antecedently, there were none, and that any analysis of them would be the merest reading into things one's own point of view. The emergency character of much of the legislation is due not only to a desire to circumvent the Supreme Court, but also to the actual existence of an emergency; and legislation of this sort is not likely to be "choosy" about its philosophy. The variety of claimants for the parental honor, likewise, makes analysis a bit difficult. Charles Beard presents an unstable emulsion with Aristotle, Machiavelli, and Locke as the components of an "American heritage" looking strangely like the Marxian class struggle which he sees reasserting itself in the New Deal.¹ Ernest Sutherland Bates names Thorstein Veblen as the prophet of the New Deal, with a far better show of truth than Beard for anyone who has read, for example, Tugwell's *Industrial Discipline*. One familiar with John Maurice Clark's *Social Control of Business* would feel that it was impossible that Clark was not the father of the New Deal. To Lewis Corey and John R. Commons, the New Deal is only the Paretan, bourgeois, fascist stage of the inevitable Marxian conflict.² Finally, now that Lenin may be added to Dr. Sun Yat Sen as among the admirers of the obscure Daniel de Leon, labor men are beginning to say that all the good ideas are de Leon's.

Within the administration there is scarcely more unity of opinion. Even Mr. Hoover had conceded that no one was going to starve; whereas an orthodox liberal must regard a little starvation here and there not only as an inevitable but also as a desirable economic purge to maintain the rate of wages. Mr. Roosevelt doesn't intend that anyone should starve; but Mr. Roosevelt has never been orthodox anyway. But he did refer to the code authori-

ties contemplated in the Recovery Administration as these "modern guilds," and in broad phrases committed himself to agreement with the provisions of the encyclical on Social Reconstruction. And the philosophical implications of that are very different from those of the liberal school. Mr. Tugwell's rather deterministic Veblenian outlook has already been spoken of; Mr. Berle on the other hand speaks for an economics of human organization which, while unduly empirical and positivist, has the advantage of seeing in man the final as well as the material and efficient cause of economic activity.³ Mr. Richberg stands in a little niche all his own, quite apart from all who hold that men are endowed with certain inalienable rights: "Every single right and protection the individual has in our society has been legally created." Meanwhile Mr. Ickes and Mr. Hopkins, with little regard for abstract major premises, go on creating work and feeding people.

For our purpose, the New Deal may be conveniently viewed under six heads: (a) monetary legislation, strictly so called; (b) financial legislation, the SEC, RFC, HOLC, etc.; (c) the AAA; (d) the NRA; (e) acts aimed at broader social control, TVA, CCC, PWA, Social Security program; (f) a marked tendency toward government by executive edict in the administration of all of these.

The principles according to which these activities will be evaluated center around the proposition that man is a person, and is by nature social. Because he is a social personality, he finds his congruous development only in stable societies the essential characteristics of which are determined by the exigencies of the human nature that they serve and protect. Of these stable, natural societies the family and the state are the chief associations of persons who are by nature cooperative and social, for the purpose of their own development. In the domain of economic

activity man creates the necessary conditions for his continuous life by means of associating with others for the production of goods, either directly by active cooperation, or indirectly through a division of labor. Cooperative association, not competition, is the first principle of economic progress, and the functional corporation is a normal and natural expression of social personality in the economic sphere. Property and contract are the chief institutions in which economic action expresses itself, and both involve inalienable personal rights. But since personal rights belong to a social person, neither of these rights is absolute; but both are very much conditioned by the ultimate aim, namely the perfection of persons in society. These limitations on the right of property and contract have long been recognized in a broad way and indeed still are. But the application of these limitations in the business world has, in the last few generations, been made to seem heretical and treasonable by those whose purposes were served by bringing about this appearance. The political state is not equipped directly to achieve economic ends; but since it is charged with maintaining the general welfare, it has a large power of regulation over economic activity. Save in the case of business which is by nature monopolistic, the state will best achieve its purpose by fostering, protecting, and occasionally restraining the association of its citizens in functional corporations—the normal form of economic organization. A functional corporation is a moral body composed of the owners, managers, workers, and consumers of the product of a given industry, together with representatives of the government. It has the obligation and the authority to maintain fair standards of wages, working conditions, price, and return to investors. Association of the representatives of the functional corporations in a national economic congress or council to determine broader questions of policy is a natural and needed outgrowth of functional organization on lower levels.⁵

Bearing in mind this general position, and also that we are not concerned with the economic wisdom of these measures, large segments of the recent legislation can be omitted. But the AAA and the NRA present special difficulties. Both tend toward an organic economy to the extent that the one fosters cooperative efforts on the part of farmers and justifies the special assistance given to that group on the grounds that this is required for the good of the whole; while the other admits a partial sympathy of interests of employer and employee and of all employers in the same industry and encourages specific agreements on both sides concerning matters that heretofore were considered to be nicely handled by the free play of competition. Both acts are an implicit rejection of the whole sum of deistic postulates underlying classical economics. The same two acts, however, while each in its own structure leaning toward organic rather than a mechanistic economy, are, in this respect, inconsistent with each other. Added to the AAA was a series of monetary provisions,

strongly inflationary in character, avowedly designed to raise agricultural, and thereby all prices. In the NRA, there was envisioned a set of wage, price, and credit agreements all conditioned upon a price level not greatly different from that prevailing at the time that the agreements were made. The full operation of the AAA would therefore have produced a price situation which would have nullified the beneficial effects of the NRA. Thus while each act regards its immediate objects as in some vague way organic, the same relationship was not conceived at all as between agriculture and business.

Though the NRA has been rather severely handled by the Supreme Court, it should be borne in mind that the reasons for the adverse decision really had little to do with the NRA. The principal ground for the condemnation was the ill-defined power, in effect legislative, delegated to the president; theoretically, the court might have approved an NRA doing exactly the same things but not under the unlimited presidential authority. Had the things which the NRA did been done by the Federal Trade Commission acting under a set of powers conferred by Congress, which though wide in scope might still have discernible limits, the Court might have had nothing to object to. On the general matter of presidential edict we shall speak presently. The second ground for the decision was that it had not been shown that the defendant was engaged in interstate commerce, a factor which does not apply at all to those code members who were unquestionably engaged in interstate commerce. Thus the Supreme Court decision in the *Schechter Case*, despite acclaims about the vindication of our Anglo-Saxon liberties, tells us little about the NRA in terms of its underlying philosophy.

The NRA was undoubtedly an advance in American methods of handling economic relations especially those between employer and employee. Nevertheless, despite all that has been said to the contrary, the NRA still regarded owner and workers as operating from totally divergent bases and to be in effect conflicting interests. The NRA was but a bargain to get them working together. One may regard this as a survival of orthodox wages-fund ideas or as a harbinger of Marxianism; in any case, it is false and unhealthy. As a result of this essentially horse-trading philosophy behind the NRA, the codes which resulted from it were a long way from being the establishment of functional corporations which are the correct expression of the organic unity of a nation's economic activity. The need of the day is economic order, which is the cooperation of agents to an end; we do not need swapping and sharp dealing, the forceful union of two conflicting agencies in the hope they will thus be able to get enough out of the consumer to make their continued connivance likely. The NRA was a compromise between two interests wrongly regarded as opposed; it was not a recognition of the essentially cooperative relation which exists between ownership, management, and labor within an industry, and between each functional group taken as a

whole and the other functional groups which make up the organic economic life of the nation. Fortunately, this was not equally true of all the codes, but it was true often enough so that it is not unfair thus to characterize the whole.

The New Deal has conferred such wide powers upon the President of the United States that we have quips to the effect that he is the only absolute monarch left. The President, apparently upon his own judgment alone, could under the licensing system of the NRA reduce any producer to servitude; the oil industry was for a time entirely under his control. He could, apparently only on his own judgment, approve or disapprove any code; his interpretation of Section 7A had for the time being the force and effect of law. As the Supreme Court held, this is certainly unconstitutional; even if it were constitutional, it is quite undesirable.

The optimum in any government is that things should be provided for according to their own measure for in this does the judgment of an administration consist. Accordingly it would be against the principle of human government if men were to be prevented by the governor of the commonwealth from carrying out their functions unless perchance for a brief time because of some emergency.⁶

This is not a statement from the writings of some 19th century "Liberalist" but from those of the Angelic Doctor. Thomas Aquinas did not think of a world in which the government dealt primarily in economic matters with the individual citizen. His economic world was full of closely knit chartered *universitates* and *corpora* which included practically all the members of the working community thus conferring upon them the benefits of both status and contract. The disappearance of those functional associations, culminating in France in 1789, destroyed the traditional organization of economic society and gave birth to the twin evils of the individual at the mercy of every adverse circumstance, and of the state undertaking the minute regulation of commerce in a manner for which it was not equipped, to the detriment of its dignity as an impartial arbiter in the inevitable disputes arising between its citizens. The concentration of economic power in the hands of the President under the New Deal is significant. To have the President of the United States charged with the determination of fair practices in the thumb and carpet-tack industry is a far departure from the wise optimum set down by Thomas Aquinas. It is a long step toward a concentration of governmental powers in one hand to which the bankruptcy of Liberalism has led in so many countries. But it is also the almost inevitable recognition of a great need. The postulates of Liberalism in the economic world are philosophically untenable and in practice intolerable. But to persons convinced that any sane agreement between employers and employees is necessarily a conspiracy in constraint of trade and thus somehow inconsistent with our Anglo-Saxon liberties, the only way in which the elemental standards of decency can be enforced in the business world is through

virtual dictatorship. The cure for the evil is evidently the rehabilitation of the autonomous self-governing functional corporations which are the normal expression of the cooperative efforts of social persons to satisfy their material needs.

The present position of legal attitudes towards economic reconstruction in the United States along functional lines may, therefore, well be summarized. Resting on the decisions of the money cases, the equipment of the federal government for the elimination of credit gyrations is, as it should be, strong. The decisions in the Minnesota moratorium case and the New York milk case maintain for the state police power all the authority that is necessary. The latter case in particular contains some refreshing pronouncements of legal economic sanity from the bench.

Neither property rights nor contract rights are absolute; for government cannot exist if the citizen may at will use his property to the detriment of his fellows or exercise his freedom of contract to work them harm. Equally fundamental with the private right is that of the public to regulate it in the common interest. . . . Due process . . . demands only that the law shall not be unreasonable, arbitrary, or capricious and that the means selected shall have a real and substantial relation to the object sought to be attained. Whether the free operation of the normal laws of competition is a wise and wholesome rule for trade and commerce is an economic question which this court need not consider or determine.

The Fourteenth Amendment, however, still stands as the stumbling block to social progress, even though the recent decisions indicate a tendency for the court to construe both liberty and due process in a much more realistic fashion. In brief, therefore, the power of the federal government over money is adequate; as is the power of the state governments in the same direction. The power of the state governments over industry and trade is sufficiently great to support the re-establishment of functional corporations. The power of the federal government over business which is unquestionably interstate is also broad enough to allow for a rejection of the court-made law concerning conspiracy. There remains, however, the broad area economically clear-cut but legally ill-defined of business which is to all practical purposes interstate, but which cannot be touched by federal enactment. Probably nothing short of constitutional amendment would make possible the necessary legislation to coerce the few chiselers in this field who always ruin the efforts of upright business men to cooperate for the general welfare.

These seeming criticisms of the Supreme Court must not be misunderstood. The doctrine of judicial review is perfectly consistent with the American and Scholastic doctrine of inalienable rights. Any person who believes in the existence of natural and inalienable (though not unlimited) rights, welcomes the existence of an independent and conscientious tribunal which will safeguard those rights from possible infringement by the ill-considered action of legislatures laboring under emotional stress of whatever sort. Both the Scholastic and the American

character of this doctrine could scarcely have been better stated than by Mr. Justice McReynolds in the Oregon School Case.

This consideration brings us to the crux of the conflict between the objectives of the New Deal which were almost wholly good, and the American fundamental law. Mr. Justice Holmes in his famous dissent in the case of *Lochner vs New York* very trenchantly remarks: "The Fourteenth Amendment does not enact Mr. Spencer's Social Statics." Nevertheless most attorneys for large corporations, and in the last forty years the majority of the justices of the Supreme Court, have acted as though it did. The time has come in the opinion of this writer at least to face the fact, established by the researches of O'Rahilly, Millar, McIlwain, Walsh, and corroborated by the economic studies of E. A. J. Johnson of Cornell, that the American Constitution is radically a Scholastic document. The founding Fathers had departed far from Scholastic theology, but it is beyond dispute that in the field of philosophy they still accepted and argued from Scholastic premises. A doctrine of freedom of contract enabling one to do anything that he pleased and to bind the state not only not to interfere with him but to protect him in the enjoyment of this inordinate autonomy would have sounded strange to the ears of James Madison and James Wilson.

When, therefore, in the course of the nineteenth century under the influence of men like Field, Harlan, Brewer, and Peckham, there was instituted the interpretation of a document written for the protection of Scholastic natural rights which carry their own limitations, a so-called Liberal and Individualistic system of rights which have neither clear foundations nor logical limits, the resulting confusion was only to be expected. The freedom of the laborer to contract for starvation wages has been sedulously defended by the Supreme Court. Mr. Justice Field in a dissent that had marked effect upon many state decisions cites approvingly a long passage of Adam Smith at his worst.⁷ Can it be without significance that the passage immediately following the one cited is an indictment of guild corporations so long favorably regarded in all Western law? You cannot mix the Scholastic tradition as brought to this country by the Puritans with the unreal postulates of the Liberalism of Herbert Spencer and expect the resulting conclusions to be consistent.

As a matter of fact the doctrines have not been applied consistently even according to the mind of Herbert Spencer. The right of private property and the right of freedom of contract are curtailed in a thousand ways on the statute books of the states and the federal government, to which no one seriously objects. But let Congress make one step in the regulation of specifically industrial property and of wage contracts of large corporations, then will the welkin ring with a hue and cry about the Anglo-Saxon liberties of joint stock corporations and holding companies.

In the first place, there are good grounds for question-

ing the application of immunities to artificial persons in the same degree as to real persons. The shrewdness of Roscoe Conkling in wording the 14th Amendment so as to include the Alabama negro and American Aluminum in one gesture of its protecting arm has had a totally unwarranted effect upon American regulation of business.⁸ Even granting the application of the immunities of the 14th Amendment to artificial persons, they still carry with them their natural limitations. Both property and contract are social institutions. The face of the earth is designed for the sustenance of all men. The natural and most efficient way of attaining this end is the development of the face of the earth under the institution of private property. When the administration of that institution, however, is such as to defeat its primary purpose of affording congruous sustenance to the cooperatively working community, then natural limitations determined by the primary end of the institution spring from the same source as the right itself. And the institution in these circumstances must be, not abolished, but so amended in its administration as to regain its efficiency in attaining its primary end, the common good. "All private goods are ordained for the common good as toward their end."⁹ The same is true in a measure of contracts. Both state and Church have long without hesitation curtailed the freedom of contract even in such a matter as the right to marry, which logically and historically antecedes the state. The power of the state to enforce or deny contracts rests in the last analysis upon the natural necessity of stable social relationships. The state exists precisely for that purpose: to promote in peace and order the common good of its citizens. The state enforces contracts to safeguard the rights of individuals most of whom have not the power to compel fulfillment, to prevent that chaos that would result if citizens set about individually to vindicate their rights, to prevent the destruction of society that would follow if individuals could with impunity ignore their contractual obligations. The state denies fulfillment of a contract either because there was in it or grew out of it an injustice to the individual against which he was not able to defend himself, or an injury to the common good. This twofold power of the state is simply a manifestation of the law of self-preservation. Man will unmake a state that does not serve him, and the state will cure or cut off a sick, infected member. There can be no contract which is exclusively private business. Contract is an instrument of social as well as personal progress. No contract is devoid of social content and when contracts between individuals are of such a nature as to produce socially harmful results it belongs to legitimate authority to stop their fulfillment and prevent their repetition. Bernardine of Sienna did not hesitate to say that "the chief purpose of both civil and private contracts is the common good," and Chief Justice Hughes in the Gold Clause Cases comes to much the same conclusion:

The conclusion was that such contracts must be understood as having been made in reference to the possible

exercise of the rightful authority of the government and that no obligation of contract can extend to the defeat of that object. . . Parties cannot remove their transactions from the reach of dominant constitutional power by making contracts about them.

A permanent New Deal is possible only when the economic order has regained its proper place between the domestic and the civil, and when the natural bond and strength of the family and the natural solidarity of the nation find their natural counterpart in the functional association which recognizes and embodies the natural community of interests of all those owners, managers, and workers, who perform their part in fulfilling the community's material needs by associating in some industry. This will become possible when the disabilities under which the labor union labors in the American courts have been removed; when property and contract are removed from the battlefield of Liberalism and restored to their correct status as natural social institutions conferring natural rights with natural limitations; when organic cooperation and not mechanistic competition is regarded as the first

principle of national economic life; when futile efforts at the socialization of goods have ceased and Americans socialize themselves; when, in short, the American Constitution is boldly and progressively and consistently interpreted in terms of the vital and realistic philosophy in which it was written.

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The Oxford Movement and New Humanism

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WITHIN a few brief years the American humanistic movement has passed from a position of promise so great that its sympathizers did not hesitate to compare it with the great Oxford Movement, to a state of hopeless stagnation. It has become, apparently, dead to the intellectual world, slain, as a wag put it, by the passing of Babbitt and the lectures of Paul Elmer More. This decline cannot but awaken in many minds a vague fear that its cause may be the blindness of the times, "unworthy to be visited." But happily, an alternate possibility suggests itself. Perhaps the comparison with the Oxford Movement was extravagant? Perhaps the expectations of its sympathizers were over-sanguine, and the seeds of its speedy dissolution present in the humanistic movement from the beginning? There would seem to be no better way of dispelling this uncertainty than to press this very comparison. As first suggested it was, frankly, superficial, inspired more by optimism than by conviction; yet it was sound as far as it went. To carry our investigation to the very heart of each movement cannot fail to disclose what assured the success of the one and the apparently inevitable oblivion of the other.

Sympathetic consideration of the New Humanism reveals that it is bound to the Oxford Movement by strong ties of common interest. Both were, in part, reactions, and as such directed against a common foe. But neither was a mere reaction. They offered constructive programs and from these it clearly appears that they strove, in the last analysis, in the interest of a common cause. And we

might well add, they have a common origin, the burning intellectual sincerity of the greatest of their proponents. Surely there are no stronger bonds than these. But one succeeded; the other, apparently, has failed. What reason can we allege for this failure? Ultimately it must be ascribed to a fatal concession which the New Humanism unhappily granted to the common enemy. Not consciously, of course, but as a matter of fact, the New Humanism directed a vigorous attack against the conclusion of its adversaries while conceding the foundations of their argument; clearly, it had sealed its own doom from the beginning. The Oxford Movement took issue with its foes on fundamentals from the first; it might have failed in its task, but it could never, like the New Humanism, die by its own hand.

The common adversary of the Oxford Movement and of the New Humanism is the subjectivistic and empirical principle. The doctrines which each opposed can clearly be traced to the dominance of this principle in contemporary thought. The Oxford Movement was many sided, its battle was waged on many fronts simultaneously. Its central issue, nevertheless, to the mind of its great leader, was the refutation of the anti-dogmatic principle. "My battle," wrote Newman, "was with liberalism; by liberalism I meant the anti-dogmatic principle and its developments."¹ The "liberals" of Newman's Oxford contended that matters of belief are subject to the analysis and criticism of reason in the same way as any other phenomenon of experience. They would admit no fact as credible

which cannot be understood or which has not actually been demonstrated. These conditions of belief, they further maintained, must be realized and fulfilled in the individual. *I cannot morally believe unless I understand.* It is dishonest for me to believe unless that which I am asked to believe has been brought home to *me* by actual proof and demonstration. Clearly, as Newman said, this is no matter of differences of creed, but a consideration antecedent to all creeds. The problem resolves itself into the question of the validity of authority as a source of true certitude, a question which the propositions of Newman's "liberals" implicitly answer in the negative. It is the prerogative of authoritative teaching, Newman and all realists maintain, that it should not be subjected to the indiscriminate criticism of individuals. It is of the objective nature of belief that the motive of the certitude it inspires should be neither the demonstrability nor personal comprehension of the object of belief, but simply the right of the teacher to propound. Consequently, Newman saw, the ulterior implication of this liberalism is a denial of the true nature and legitimacy of all belief. And since faith, that is, belief in the dogmas of religion authoritatively taught, is the only legitimate foundation of supernatural religion, it must eventually come to a denial of Christianity, too. "From the age of fifteen," Newman wrote, "dogma has been the foundation of my religion; I know no other religion." Against this subjectivistic and individualistic position he directed the most strenuous and sustained of his philosophic efforts.

The subjectivism against which the New Humanism directed its efforts appeared under a very different guise. Babbitt, surely the most ardent and untiring protagonist of the New Humanism, recognized as its foe a doctrine which he calls naturalism. Supporting this doctrine he discerned two distinct, but complementary, attitudes of mind, the scientific and the sentimentalist or romantic. The chief characteristic of naturalism is its tendency to obliterate or ignore distinctions, a tendency induced by both the scientific and sentimentalist temperaments. It fails, in the first place, to distinguish adequately between man and the physical world. Rather, it actually identifies man with the physical creation as a part is said to be identified with the whole. It resolves the law of man's life into a unique and ultra-complicated, but nevertheless authentic, manifestation of the laws of the universe, and his being into ultimate components which are purely physical. Secondly, naturalism fails to discriminate between the elements of man's own life. It ignores the fact that man is capable of activities so diverse that they clearly indicate the presence of diverse proximate principles of action. The naturalistic philosopher identifies the active and strenuous life of intellect and will with the effortless and passive life of instinct and impulse by reducing them to a common denominator which he interprets as purely physical, the sensation. Again, naturalism fails to distinguish the essential, natural social character of man from the conventionality of certain forms of society. It maintains that all

society is essentially artificial and that the true unit of human life is the independent individual. It is led to these conclusions quite naturally by the scientific and the romantic attitude of mind alike.

The scientific attitude of mind is positivistic, sensistic, and individualistic. It holds that the test of reality is the immediate sensible perception of the individual. But how many realities there are which cannot be perceived in this way! And among them are the distinctive qualities of man's nature. As a consequence, the spiritual activities of mind and will baffle the scientific naturalist. The sentimentalist attitude is born of what Babbitt loved to call the connatural indolence of man's nature, which makes the effort of the life of will and intellect and the exactions of social intercourse intolerable to the romantic individual. Rather than submit to their discipline, he asserts that they are unnatural. Human life, then, for the naturalist, is wholly material and individual, and the basis for his position is a subjectivistic and individualistic attitude of mind. This naturalism Babbitt recognized as the enemy of the New Humanism.

The contention that the Oxford Movement and the New Humanism owe to a common cause the inspiration of their efforts against this common enemy would seem, at first sight, to be extravagant. If we restrict our view to the specific propositions which each defended, we can find little of a common cause between them. To mention a single difference, absolutely radical from this point of view, the one is essentially religious, the other, it is not too much to say, simply areligious. But if we consider them in their historical relation, it becomes clear that the Oxford Movement, in vindicating the essential religious character of man, was championing in its highest manifestation the same spiritual supremacy of man over the physical world that the New Humanism sought to affirm in its bare essentials.

The liquefying forces which were released in the Protestant Revolt and in the pagan Italian Renaissance have been constantly and progressively working at the destruction of this supremacy. They attacked first its highest manifestations; gradually its very existence was denied. Protestantism did not immediately deny the religious character of man. Its ostensible object was rather the free and full development of this character; but the principles upon which it is founded implicitly contain the ultimate denial of all religion. The pagan Renaissance did not begin by debasing man to community of life with the animal. Quite the contrary, its most outstanding characteristic is its extravagant exaltation of man. Yet in this very exaltation lay the seeds of the abysmal degradation which has been achieved in our own day. When the occasion for the work of the Oxford Movement, for its particular affirmation of this spiritual supremacy, presented itself, the action of the Protestant Revolt had not progressed to the denial of the essential need of man for religion. As Newman himself affirms, the most prominent "liberals" at the Oxford of his day

were among the most sincere and pious Christians. Consequently, the immediate aim of the movement was purely religious. When Newman pressed the issue to the question of the logical implications of liberalism he was really outstripping adversaries and colleagues alike. It is no disparagement to say that of his colleagues and followers none save perhaps W. G. Ward really saw these implications; that the latter did see them seems clearly attested by his *Philosophy of Theism*. As for his adversaries, Dr. Arnold, for instance, was blind to them to the end, and Stanley seems never even to have suspected their existence. But at the time that the New Humanism brought forth its affirmation of this spiritual supremacy the work of destruction was very nearly complete. Protestantism was admittedly a dead issue. The naturalists were supreme, and proclaimed, not only with impunity but with acclaim, the essential and total animality of man. It was no longer a question of defending the highest manifestation of man's spiritual supremacy, but of establishing any real supremacy. So the New Humanist concentrated his effort upon the affirmation of the fact of man's basic humanity, with little leisure to examine the full nature of what he defended. This is, of course, the position of the humanist at his best. It was, then, in reality that "substantive weight of human events which is history" that eventually determined the peculiar character of the affirmation of man's distinctive nature brought forth respectively by the Oxford Movement and the New Humanism. The humanity they championed is essentially the same.

Yet we still have to account for this fact: the Oxford Movement was successful and is still bearing fruit, and this is so, we may be sure, because it was as timely as it was vigorous. But the New Humanism, surely as timely and no less vigorous, admittedly has proven ineffectual. An explanation seems to suggest itself when we consider the constructive attitude and program of the latter. The New Humanism has failed because it sought to establish the contradictory of naturalism on a principle of which naturalism is the logical outcome. The modern Humanist has failed to read aright the signs of the times, and has been ensnared by the trap of modernity. To demonstrate to the modern critical mind the existence of man's spiritual supremacy over the physical world, he has believed, it is necessary to base one's proof upon principles which the modern mind recognizes as valid. It has not occurred to him to question the validity of the principles of the modern mind. The modern critical mentality is positivistic, subjectivistic, non-authoritative. Newman had recognized this long before, and had opposed to it the realism of the following passage:

Every religious mind, under every dispensation of Providence, will be in the habit of looking out of and beyond self, as regards all matters connected with its highest good. For a man of religious mind is he who attends to the rule of conscience, which is born with him, which he did not make for himself, and to which he feels bound in duty to submit. And conscience immediately directs his thoughts

to some Being exterior to himself, who gave it, and who evidently is superior to him; for a law implies a lawgiver, and a command implies a superior. Thus a man is at once thrown out of himself, by the very Voice which speaks within him; and while he rules his heart and conduct by his inward sense of right and wrong, not by the maxims of the external world, still that inward sense does not allow him to rest in itself, but sends him forth again from home to seek abroad for Him who put His Word in him.²

He had no illusions about the validity of the very principles of the "modern mind" of his day. But the modern Humanist concedes this basic issue. Babbitt subscribes to the positivistic maxim that "that alone is real which is immediately perceived" and that "illusion is an integral part of man's intellectual life." Paul Elmer More looks with suspicion on an "absolute" in any form, in morals, faith, or criticism. And among the younger adherents of the movement we find Norman Foerster speaking vaguely of the need of setting up an "inner authority" to replace the outer authority which has failed.³ This is indeed the cause of the ineffectualness of the New Humanism. But to it we should add the further fact of its attitude toward religion. On this point, too, it has been betrayed into an uncritical acquiescence to the modern mind. It is the modern mind which has evolved the conception of religion as an experience, the conception which Newman repudiated with fire. The New Humanism has accepted the validity of this conception, and quite normally has been repelled by it. As a consequence, most of its adherents have tried to assume an areligious attitude, an attitude essentially false to human nature.

The time has come of which Newman wrote these words:

Then indeed will be the stern encounter, when two real and living principles, simple, entire, and consistent, one in the Church, the other out of it, at length rush upon each other, contending not for names and words, or half-views, but for elementary notions and distinctive moral characters.⁴

The New Humanism compromised with the enemy; it could therefore do nothing. It could not even postpone the day of conflict. Its weakness came to be recognized by friend and foe alike. Nothing will suffice in our day but the fullest affirmation of man's spiritual nature, the assertion of its full religious significance, the demonstration of its existence upon the realist principles which alone can support it. It is time for an uncompromising Christian Humanism which alone can realize the perennial aspiration of the human spirit toward full and perfect life.

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Agrarianism: An Economic Foundation

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... We have failed to acknowledge that six million farms have provided the widest diffusion of privately owned productive property in the United States, as well as the widest diffusion of self-employed families, in contrast to the regimented employment of men in factories and in urban industries generally

This is a quotation from the *Statement on the Present Crisis* published by the bishops of the Administrative Committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. These leaders in the social field urge the maintenance and reestablishment of the small farm in an economy which found.

The reasons why we have failed to acknowledge the importance of a wide diffusion of productive property in the land, and its importance for the nation are many. Within the last decade many economists endeavored to promote a novel economic era in which industry and finance were to be the all important factors. The fact that stocks and bonds continued to rise while grain and livestock moved to lower levels on the markets was proof sufficient for such economists that farming was no longer a basic factor in the national well-being. The vision that agriculture was to be but a negligible factor in our new scheme of economic progress grew larger and more distinct in the industrial and financial minds of modern economists. They ignored the facts: that forty million people lived on the land; that it could provide a home and adequate sustenance for millions more; that the farmers constituted the largest class of owners of productive property; and that they were the largest class gainfully employed.

In this new Economics the land too was property that could be incorporated, accumulated, collectivized, and for the sake of a false efficiency (for in their Economics, property was not important) the men, women, and children who lived on the land, should become workers for the Corporation, and tenants for the Real Estate Banks. In such a policy of incorporation, accumulation, and collectivization, it was always a basic factor to find more property for the incorporated capitalist and incorporated money lender. It was not important to preserve the ownership for the many. It was more essential to the type of modern progress that the people should be workers, factory hands, the most efficient wage slaves for the gigantic and most efficient corporation—the legal and economic god of the century. If any worker retained a desire for the ownership of anything, he could be allowed to acquire a share or two of the common, very common stock, a stock which was calculated to reach the common people from the dizzy heights of the Corporation's pyramid.

If these economists had turned to history they would have found that the fortunes of a people go up or down

with their farmers. Rome, deprived of strength and support from the rural areas, began to decay in all the members of her imperial life. And when for an extended time she had allowed the tillers of her soil to remain impoverished her final doom was inevitable. She withered and died like a plant without root or moisture. The life of the great Empire of today, England, was threatened for a time, because of a neglected land foundation. This great commercial and manufacturing nation, unable to sell its manufactured products and forced to buy food supplies, found that it did not have a solid and dependable foundation for its national life. Grappling desperately with this problem, the English leaders turned for security to the rehabilitation of small farms and the establishment of a large rural population.

In America the independent man of the soil, the small business man, the small banks, the little community owned factories—all these, once correctly conscious of personal interest, exercising personal responsibility, making a natural dependable security for our democratic institutions, gave us an adequately solid foundation upon which a specialized system of industry could rest. These independent men of the soil and the small business men were the men for whom the Constitution was written. Today we falsely believe that it was written to cover the legal and political needs of the corporations, the daily workers, and the unemployed. It is expected to provide equitable protection for both the man whose incorporated millions multiply and the man who has nothing and finds it often enough impossible to sell his labor. We forget that our American Constitution, for its effectiveness in operation, presupposes a wide distributism in property and gives only a few legal safeguards necessary for the maintenance of private property.

As the Agrarian ownership background against which this great Magna Charta was cast rapidly disappears, the charge is often made that this legal document, the world's greatest charter of liberty, is dead, inadequate, unsuited to the needs of the modern man. In the years when individuals were the owners of property in a normal distribution and a normal market exchange this fundamental law of our land conferred liberty, justice, and happiness in a measure unsurpassed in the whole history of laws and constitutions. Under it the people and their government would have continued to administer justice and would have maintained a just economy in which the property would have remained reasonably distributed, if the artificial legal device, the corporation, and its industrial forces had not moved them from their foundations. Today the corporations claim the Constitution, although it was originally written for the individual owners; and incor-

porated industry poses as the complete and adequate foundation of all our economic strength, although the land ultimately proves itself to be the fundamental source of every nation's economic power.

In such a situation it is inevitable that difficulties should arise about the Constitution unless we come to realize that it is social and legal wisdom to regard a corporation as a mere instrument subject to modification and subservient to the individual citizen; and that it is economic prudence to regard land and other property, owned and operated for the most part by the individual, a better foundation for prosperity in a democratic nation, than a complete and unmodified use of the corporation with its factory and its factory methods in every business activity, with its few millionaires, and its millions of auction-block laborers. Unrestrained development of corporations, bankers' greed, lack of unity and intelligent action of the citizens through their government, have taken us far afield from our old constitutional agrarian position of wide property distribution and prosperity and economic security for the many.

Although we have our Constitution, and to some extent a distributed ownership in much of our land, together with a widespread approval of the doctrine of private ownership, yet, according to many political scientists and economists we have moved well nigh irrevocably down the road of corporation monopoly and unemployment in every enterprise, kingly estates and slums in every city, extreme wealth for the few and bitter poverty for the masses, capitalization of all property, both industrial and agricultural, by a few corporations, and the reduction of the vast majority of our citizens to workers, tenants, sharecroppers. Corporations with merger and all devices of economic and legal control, usurious interest with wholesale foreclosure, unsound manipulation of the nation's volume of money by banker, broker, and politician—all these have made of us a nation of dispossessed people. And it is no consolation whatever to learn from government and corporation statistics that the total wealth of the nation is much greater today.

Our Constitution cannot secure a full measure of liberty and political rights for a citizenry of workers, tenants, and sharecroppers. But this does not mean that there is an inherent weakness in the Constitution itself. A condition absolutely necessary for the effective operation of the Constitution in its extension of liberty and the exercise of political rights is private property available for the establishment and maintenance of a widely diffused private ownership. The Constitution did not concentrate wealth by joint-stock corporations; it did not diminish the number of property owners by usurious practice and wholesale foreclosure. All this was done despite the Constitution. Statesmen without vision, corporations with charters free of all limitations, a citizenry without an adequate understanding of the importance of many small owners in a democratic nation, bankers who could manipulate credit without any reference to just markets—all

these contributed their share in promoting an economic situation which has gone far towards the destruction of widespread private ownership, abbreviated our liberty and independence and re-introduced some of the elements of slavery into the lives of many. To the extent at least that private ownership has been modified by the growth of a corporate system which is too large and doing business without the proper legal checks; to the extent that usury, hiding itself under interest, profit and dividend, has uprooted the property of many owners, the Constitution is dead, for the liberties of which it so eloquently speaks can survive only with much small ownership.

If the industrial spread continues, if the corporation proceed with the capitalization of the agricultural field, making a factory of the land, then the Constitution with all its securities for the individual will be useless. It will then have been completely supplanted by joint-stock profit and dividend policies. If it retains any life or vigor, it will be that which it will be interpreted to have as a weapon against the people, securing the so-called private domination and ownership of the artificial person, the corporation, placing itself in a position superior to both the individual citizen and the State.

At the present moment the individual States and the citizens would render the National Government an incalculable service and practically save the Federal Constitution if they took a firm legal stand, refusing to grant charters to any groups who wish to acquire large tracts of land and engage in agricultural pursuits, and making a reasonably just and legal provision for the resale to individuals of all lands acquired by banks on defaulted loans within a just and reasonable time. To make the agrarian private ownership position and the policy of land operation and ownership on a family basis complete and unmistakable, charters already granted to agricultural corporations should be revoked. Such action would secure for the nation a land foundation of private widely diffused ownership.

In so far as the Federal and State governments have failed to limit and control joint-stock charters in business enterprises where private operation and ownership could flourish efficiently and prosperously, they have failed in their important duty of protecting a distributed private ownership of property for their citizens. Much social harm could be prevented and much damage repaired if Statesmen adopted a policy to keep the corporation from the land ownership and operation, to retain this ownership and operation for the present farmers and for many who could be induced to acquire and operate land—a policy in which they would not allow our last great class of private owners to be reduced to tenants, sharecroppers, and daily workers. If such a policy and such legal procedure is not followed, the vast majority of our citizens will soon be propertyless, fortunate if they have a boss and a pay envelope. They will be free citizens, free workers according to the letter of the law, at least, and under the best conditions at work. But their freedom will be

deviated, dangerously so in proportion to the extent to which property and its ownership is not within their hands. Fewer and fewer of the many liberties guaranteed in constitutional and legislative decree are enjoyed by the people when they are placed more and more at the mercy of the corporation kings and joint-stock lords.

With a government ready to bow in submission to joint-stock bigness in every enterprise, with a nation of many hands, disunited, uneducated in cooperation, often ignorant of what their just demands might be, and too far from the point of starvation to have the courage to make just demands, the whole commonwealth comes to depend more and less upon its laws for justice and is compelled by necessity to follow the narrow policies of greed and exploitation which are hatched in the secret chambers of a joint-stock commercialism. Perhaps this joint-stock road to economic development does not lead directly to slavery, but it reaches that destination from time to time, leaving only to return later. The law itself does not make a man a slave today, except in so far as it neglects him, fails to protect his ownership, sets up the joint-stock device which makes his continued ownership a worthless thing, then offers him a job and treats him, though he be a free worker, often enough as though he were a slave.

The individual ownership and operation of property has a very intimate connection with liberty. Governments which wrenched property rights from their own citizens and from conquered nations established slavery. The disenfranchised peoples soon found, when their property was gone, that they themselves were property, mere chattels in whom others claimed a just possession and a right of disposal. The capitalist who concentrates wealth in joint-stock enterprise, the communist who teaches that property belongs to the State, the banker who by credit inflation and deflation gains control of economic fields—these, of them, by destroying the property of individuals either by apparent legal methods or otherwise, are destroying the house of human liberty, a house which rests on the foundation of extensive property distribution. Throughout the countries where joint-stock monopolies, communism, banker confiscation, and wholesale foreclosure prevail, there are already unmistakable signs of human life less free than slave.

Where the State is the owner of all property, its citizens are slaves, unless as the Dictator of that State, he considers himself to be the owner. But for his fellow citizens there is no such alternative. Little will they profit the way of liberty from the consideration that theoretically they are the joint owners of all property. Such a State has no property law to respect, and as a result it cannot be relied upon to grant much liberty. In all, in work, in play, in family life, in religion, in social activity, the State is the Master. Every human activity has no reference to property either as the cause or necessary condition. Where the property belongs to the State, the citizen cannot be free, because the State's property regulations qualify his activity in every field. His head, his

hand, his heart, unless he should rise in rebellion and even if he does, become the property of the State, just as truly as the land, the house, the business enterprise that was once his own, is now the property of the State. Such a man, without property rights, resembles a chattel more than a human being, a helpless child more than a strong man, a wretched slave more than an honored citizen.

However a very similar case arises in a State where from the want of adequate legislative safeguards for a sane cooperative economy or because of reckless concession of joint-stock and political privileges, a comparatively few citizens acquire too large a portion of the national wealth. The majority of the citizens, bereft of adequate productive property, become at once the free workers, free, if you will, according to the letter of the law, on the properties of another. If working conditions are good, these workers may be able to acquire some property, but in reality the cards are stacked against them. Working terms and conditions become less favorable, property concentration continues, because of the power, economic, political, and social, which comes to the few owners along with and through their new, abnormal, highly privileged accumulations of wealth.

Although in this country joint-stock expansion far beyond its usefulness as a business auxiliary, unsound credit manipulation, abnormal changes in the nation's volume of money, and political corruption and privilege with a maldistribution of the burdens of taxation have greatly increased the number of worker citizens and reduced the number of owner citizens, yet, there are at present many small groups at work, rebuilding the foundation for the Constitution that it may continue to stand firm, amid all the violent winds of change, on that necessary foundation—a very widely distributed ownership for the many. All of these groups turn to the land as that class of property in which the best and most rapid progress can be made in the preservation and distribution of individual ownership.

Most Rev. Edwin O'Hara in quoting Most Rev. John T. McNicholas, "the strength of the home, the strength of the nation, and of the Church must rest in large measure on contented rural family life," gives the keynote of the program of the Rural Life Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. The devoted and zealous men at work in this strong organization are making successful progress with study clubs, cooperatives, credit unions, etc., for the rehabilitation of the farm home and the resettlement of many families on small farms personally owned.

The Southern Gentlemen, cooperative authors of the notable book, *I'll Take My Stand*,² and their publishers, especially the *American Review*, are giving eloquent expression to a rational agrarianism with its basic and sane economy. These cultured Southerners write with a trenchant pen, making this potent instrument once more the guide to a saner, far happier, more correct way of living.

The Catholic Workers in their newest venture, The Farming Commune, are educating men and women in a new rural economy which can serve as a foundation for a

rational, ethical, and moral social order. In lifting the individual from the mire of economic and social degradation they place first things in life first—family subsistence and sufficient prosperity in an environment where life can express itself in religion, in the arts, and in good manners, inventiveness in the use of Mother Earth, personal independence, liberation from the efficiency demands of a corporation boss, and freedom from the misery of a diminishing pay envelope.

In addition to these groups there are the men who have saved American communities to some extent at least from the exploitation of corporations by establishing non-profit enterprises—consumer and producer cooperatives. These men with courage to build upon the loyalty of the members of their own communities and with strong faith in their broader philosophy of life, stand their ground in a business world, protecting the small independent producer and consumer wherever he is being bombarded with the big business guns of joint-stock monopoly. Builders of such community cooperatives deserve a place alongside the English distributists who preserve and extend the system of small holdings, especially in Agriculture.

Perhaps the Federal Government should be placed in this general Agrarian group, because of its Agricultural Adjustment Act, its subsistence homesteading and its Resettlement Administration. But its position is made obscure by the administrators of its projects. These men use the terminology of industrial economists and neglect

to emphasize the human values of an unincorporated agrarian system. They would control production in the farm in the same way as in the factory, establish homesteads only by way of temporary relief, and allow the further capitalization of joint-stock interests in extensive land holdings. Meanwhile we cannot safely say whether they lean toward a joint-stock capitalization of the land or whether they defend a widely diffused unincorporated agrarian ownership in the national economy. This is unfortunate because the success of the agrarian plan will require prudent government assistance in such forms as provision for easier credit terms, modification of foreclosure proceedings, and a closer supervision for the maintenance of justice and parity in the farm markets with effective protection against commercial joint-stock competition and exploitation.

From a consideration of these groups and individuals who are working earnestly to restore the small owners and operators on the land, we can see that agrarianism is not dead. It is a philosophy of ownership which lives and gives new hope to many that they may be able to live the lives upon the soil, in an environment which is wholesome, and an economy which is rational. It is the philosophy which will save the Constitution, restore it to its foundation, and provide for the survival of its liberties.

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² *I'll Take My Stand*, (Harper and Brothers, New York, 1930)

Resurgent Catholicism

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THIS paper is not concerned with what should be evident to all literate people—the fact of a resurgent Catholicism. In Europe the intellectual world is well aware that new life is surging through the old Church and that She exerts once again a tremendous influence on civilization. I shall try merely to suggest the contribution that Catholic thought can make to the one really fundamental problem of America, namely, the problem of American culture. Even when restricted in this way, the topic is still, I fear, unmanageable.

By culture, I mean the way of life of a people. Every group, if it is to survive, must adapt itself to an environment of some kind, and the manner of life which results from this adaptation is the culture of that group, or its type of civilization. So defined, culture may be said to embrace two factors, one material, the other spiritual. The former is practically synonymous with external environment and includes such factors as climate, soil, proximity to water routes, etc. The latter consists in the *vision of reality* characteristic of the group.¹ It will be evident at once that the spiritual element, which, by the way, Mr. Christopher Dawson has shown to be ordinarily religious,

is the more important by far, since it is the *cause* of culture, whereas the material element can be nothing more than a determining condition. From the spiritual element—the vision of reality, the meaning attributed to human existence—will flow the scale of values which will affect the group's relation to its environment and distinguish that group culturally from other groups. Kipling's refrain, "East is East, West is West, and never the twain shall meet," contains, however accidentally, a very profound truth. Between the Oriental's vision of reality and that of the Christian Occidental there is a fundamental and irreconcilable difference, and this difference is due not only to a minor way to climate, topography, and other material factors. East is East and not West largely because of philosophy and religion.

Now we hear on all sides that America is undergoing a radical transformation. According to the approach outlined above, this can only mean that the American Vision is changing, or has already changed. The all-important question for those who have at heart the future of American civilization thus becomes: what will be, what must be the nature of this change? The various and conflicting

ers to this question differentiate the thought-groups who are warring today to determine the future of American civilization. Lesser figures, alas, are complicating the issue, Dr. Townsends, Upton Sinclairs, but behind them all is the vision which they earnestly strut the real battle which they fought—the battle for America's soul.

What, then, was the vision which inspired American civilization? We must answer this question as best we can because we cannot understand change until we understand what it is that is changing, or where the change is coming from. Furthermore, unless we are prepared to abandon the American Vision, we must strive to understand its meaning in order to see whether or not they are still living in the highly complex life of modern times.

The study of our early intellectual history shows that the United States arose under the influence of a double moral force: the one purely rational, the other religious; Liberalism and Calvinism. The men who formulated the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, the Virginia Statute of Religious Liberty, the Constitution—the documents which give the clearest expression of the American Vision—were for the most part children of the "Enlightenment," firm believers in reason as opposed to the claims of revelation, in nature as opposed to the supernatural. On the other hand, the Puritan outlook on reality with its Divine Election and Predestination, dominating the intellectual life of New England, spreading wherever New England spread, that is, all over the North and West.

Between the ideals of Liberalism and those of Puritanism there was, and is, a bridgeless gap. Liberalism, if it means anything, means Liberty—liberty of thought, of action, religious, political, and economic liberty. Logically it seems impossible to reconcile these things with Predestination and Divine Election; and yet, by various expedients, sundry expedients, some, alas, not entirely honorable—a constitution embodying the Liberal vision was accepted by the Thirteen States and became the basis of a new nation.

This original lack of unity is the key to an understanding of the American Story. Mr. Christopher Hollis expressed this idea some five years ago in his pungent and provocative *American Heresy*. Recently several others, including Mr. James Truslow Adams, have developed the same thesis. From no other viewpoint can the contradictions in our history be more satisfactorily explained. Liberalism, the struggle for the West, the endless quarrels over the tariff, Clay, Webster, Calhoun, the chain of promises, finally the Civil War—all arose directly and necessarily out of the lack of unity in the original American vision.

With such a foundation, it is not to be wondered at that with the weakening of religious faith in the nineteenth century materialism and pragmatism began in the effort to supersede the American Vision. Once morality had been shut up within the walls of the churches, it was

easy to disregard it completely; and this disregard eventually became so complete that America's leading industrialist, Mr. Henry Ford, could in our own day promulgate an entirely new American dogma, namely "that anything which is economically right is also morally right. There can be no conflict between good economics and good morals."² For a long time the South held out against the materialistic colossus of the North, but the tide of the nineteenth century was flowing too strongly toward industry and commerce. An economy based on land, a social life that understood leisure, a conception of politics as the occupation of cultured and intelligent men—all realizations of the American Vision—were hapless in the face of Adam Smith and the machine. An anachronistic form of property hastened the downfall of the South, and with its passing, the age of the plutocratic dinosaurs began.³

The America that followed the Civil War was the America of New England, not that of Virginia; the America of Hamilton—if it is necessary to name a sponsor among the constitutional Fathers—not that of Jefferson; the America of Calvinism, not that of Liberalism. The American Dream, the dream of a land where life would be freer, fuller, richer than it had ever been before, had become the nightmare of plutocracy, although that Dream was still incorporated in the Constitution and continued to edify the children of the disinherited in our grammar schools. Jefferson had seen a rainbow in the sky; Hamilton looking more closely saw at the end of the rainbow a pot of gold. And driven on by a religious commercialism, America chose the pot of gold. Since the Civil War we have continued to pay lip service to the shrine of American liberties—the plutocrats and their political hirelings being the most loudly devout—but the steady weakening of Liberty has also continued. Today one does not have to be a prophet to see that we are slipping gradually into some form of the Servile State.⁴

The American Dream, then, has failed. Whatever our civilization is today, it is surely not that envisaged by the men who drew up our Constitution. Those of us who believe that, losing liberty, all is lost, who abominate any form of the Totalitarian State, who hate a dictatorship which destroys democracy, whether that dictatorship be of the Right or the Left, are not willing to surrender this Dream easily and without a struggle. We are naive enough to believe in the American Dream, in the tremendous potentialities of a human nature redeemed by Christ, in Liberty, Fraternity, and essential Equality. We believe in the supremacy of spiritual values over material values, without, however, denying to the material goods of life their place in human society. We do not want to return to the primitive conditions of early American life. We welcome the contributions of science and the marvels of the machine. But we are unwilling that these should dominate us and enslave us. We still want a nation "conceived in Liberty and dedicated to the proposition that

all men are created equal," a land where life will really be richer and fuller than life has ever been heretofore.

No, we are not willing to believe that the failure of the American Dream is final. We think that it still lives on in the minds and hearts of our people, and that, if the causes of this temporary failure can be discovered and removed, our Dream will live again and inspire future generations.

The two elements that formed the American vision were incomplete and contradictory. We never had a homogeneous civilization on these shores. We never had a national culture. We never had a philosophy of life to which all our people, or a determining number of them, could subscribe. There was bound to be a conflict of ideals sooner or later, charges of tyranny and countercharges, a struggle, and a change; for no culture can survive over a long period of time unless the people living within that culture are agreed on certain great fundamental truths about life. The history of the past four hundred years—there is no need to go back further—shows how well the rulers of states have known this fact. The Communists of Russia and the Nazis of Germany understand it too. America cannot escape the laws of life. If our country is to survive, we must find a basis for a unified vision of reality and build on that.

Everyone, I think, would admit that Catholicism can give America such a vision. The difficulty is that the American people will, in their present temper, have none of it. They are, as Mr. Gorham Munson once euphemistically put it, "to psychologically distant from Rome." Well, if not to Catholicism, where then shall we go? We don't want Communism and the dogmas of materialism. Neither will we accept plutocracy and the promise of a full dinner pail. There would seem to remain only Liberalism—and we are back at the beginning. But Liberalism has failed once, and with the present trend toward slavery and barbarism would fail again. Indeed, it has been failing all along until now it is almost extinct. Lately such a staunch defender of the cause as the *New Republic* appears to have surrendered completely to the enemy.⁵ Plutocracy, the fruit of Liberalism in politics and Liberalism in economics, has swallowed up the Enlightenment.

If by some miracle or other (the supposition is, naturally speaking, as interesting as it is futile), America should turn to Catholicism, it will find there not only a unified vision, but a vision that embraces the best elements of the original American Dream, and more besides. Liberalism may die completely in the modern world, Liberalism with a capital L, historical Liberalism, but as long as the Church stands, liberalism will never perish from the face of the earth.

For the Church is the Mother of our liberalism as she is the Mother of our morality. "Christianity," writes Mr. Bertrand Russell with surprising candor, "taught that every human being has an immortal soul, and that, in

this respect, all men are equal; the 'rights of man' was only a development of Christian doctrine."⁶ Puritanism and Liberalism are heresies, that is, emasculations of integral Christianity. The characteristic doctrines of Calvin are truths as old as Catholic Europe, truths that have been distorted, thrown out of focus, overemphasized. Liberalism plucked some of the finest flowers of the Catholic tradition—the brotherhood of man, the Fatherhood of God, the idea of Liberty, the belief in the inherent value of the individual, confidence in Reason, the dream of progress and perfection—and upon them attempted to found a new and brighter order. But just as the flower separated from the branch fades and dies, so has Liberalism died, and with it the whole modern world, the latest great experiment in the sterility of heresy. It is the failure of Naturalism, the failure of the attempt to build civilization upon Man separated from God.⁷ To seek to return to the American ideal by way of Naturalism—and mere Humanism, as well as Liberalism, is a form of Naturalism—regardless of what political or economic or social form it may take, is futile to the point of pathos. No longer is there any place for compromise. We must boldly select between stark materialism, which is barbarism, and the integral, uncompromising spirituality of Catholicism, which is civilization.

If this seems needlessly intransigent, I would remind my readers that we can still meet the American mind in the realm of pure reason. After all, reason, at least for adults, must always precede Faith. America must accept Catholicism freely, if at all; rationally, because it is true, not emotionally and blindly, because it is useful.

Neither would such acceptance lead to a slavish and unimaginative uniformity. The result of the Reformation is not a wide and suggestive variety; rather, it is confusion. Variety supposes unity: the two are complementary, not contradictory. Catholicism would, indeed, put confusion to rout, but by uniting people on the essential things would produce, not the slavish uniformity in accidental that we have today, but a rich and infinitely varied culture, repeating in the New World, her amazing triumph in the Europe of the Middle Ages.

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- ¹ The reader will find these ideas developed with much detail in Christopher Dawson's *Progress and Religion* (Sheed and Ward, London, 1933).
- ² Quoted by James Truslow Adams, *Epic of America* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934), p. 400.
- ³ *Ibid.*, *America's Tragedy* (Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1934).
- ⁴ Hilaire Belloc's *The Servile State* is very pertinent to our present discussion. Post-war developments have shown the prophetic nature of this book published in 1911.
- ⁵ "Liberalism Twenty Years After," *New Republic*, January 23, 1935.
- ⁶ Bertrand Russell, "The Revolt Against Reason," *Atlantic Monthly*, February, 1935.
- ⁷ Herbert Agar is a case in point. See especially the obscure conclusion to *The People's Choice*, one of the best recent studies of America. See also the conclusion of Adams' *Epic of America*.

Eirenikon—Editorial

FAVORITE theme with writers of popular fiction at the turn of the century centered about a group of people who, because of some cataclysmic disturbance, were cut off from the rest of the world. Centuries passed before someone from the outside broke through and found descendants of these people with their strange old language and stranger folk-ways. The plot was built around the resulting contrasts and conflicts between these people from within the imprisoned hamlet and those without.

Is it stretching the analogy too far to say that Catholic folk, at least in countries of Protestant culture, have thus cut off culturally from their fellow-citizens since the Reformation? Indeed, even in countries nominally Catholic, Catholicism as a culture, as a philosophy of life has been known in its full sweep by comparatively few. Only of late has a resurgent Catholicism challenged the modern world. This strange folk, this *gens lucifuga* whose sudden disappearance was prophesied by the fathers of the Church, now living, has suddenly become vocal, to some ears more loudly so. The renaissance of the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, the social philosophy of Peter's successors, the Catholic literary revival in England and on the Continent,

all have attracted attention in quarters the most unexpected. Bewilderment at the very notion that there should be such a phenomenon as Catholic thought has been followed by genuine admiration and a willingness to consider that possibly this strange folk, so lately emerged from seclusion, has solutions for the problems of the day that the world might well ponder.

It is in no spirit of arrogance that THE MODERN SCHOOLMAN in its current issue offers these tentative expositions of the Catholic answers to the world-problems that beset our common civilization. Rather, they are presented in the sincere hope that they will provoke discussion from divergent groups who believe with the SCHOOLMAN that there is a civilization and a culture worth salvaging, no matter how badly battered by contemporary evils. From this discussion it is hoped will come constructive suggestion that will be of service to them and to us. The advance is made with no blare of trumpets or clanking of sabers; rather we come forward, olive branches in our hands, hoping that some at least of our offerings may prove helpful, may serve as guide-posts to lead us out of the bogs and quagmires of muddled thought.

Book Reviews

VITAL CONTROL

Lynn Harold Hough

The Abingdon Press, New York, 1934, \$2.00

The use of a translation of the late Irving Babbitt's *vital frein* as a title for this collection of essays gives one the keynote of Hough's approach to contemporary critical problems. He is definitely in the tradition of Babbitt and More and in some respects shows greater consistency than either of these in facing the ultimate implications of a true Humanism. The humanistic notion that "man is the measure of all things" does not solve the whole problem of reality: the critic must face the question of whether there is a world above man as well as a sub-human one. Thus a philosophy that refuses to go beyond man to the ultimate metaphysical principles "will inevitably seem like a half-way house." Dr. Hough makes a point here with which every Scholastic would agree.

This basis of a Christian humanism underlies the excellent analysis of a number of contemporary books and authors. Doubtless the studies of More and Babbitt and of humanistic principles in general form the finer portion of the work which will serve as a penetrating introduction to one of the more important fields of modern critical movements. The essay on Comprehensive Scholarship—Dr. Hough holds the chair of Comprehensive Scholarship at Drew University—cannot but recall Newman's *Idea of a University*. The great Cardinal would surely agree that "that knowledge which is held apart from its large and essential relationships becomes unproductive and unprofitable." To see the parts in the light of the whole" is a solid principle of education that more than ever needs to be emphasized in this day of overspecialization. Dr. Hough's opposition is not to the truly scholarly specialist who can correlate his knowledge

to the whole of reality, but to the one-track mind that has lost the power of grasping comprehensive relationships.

In regard to one point in particular I should like to disagree with Dr. Hough. Though Platonism has formed the basis of the rich Augustinian tradition in Scholastic philosophy, nevertheless, it is not the only "royal road from Humanism to religion." That other great Greek, Aristotle, has provided the foundation upon which Aquinas built probably the most comprehensive Christian *Weltanschauung* in the philosophical order. This Aristotelico-Thomistic synthesis not only has proven itself the *philosophia perennis*, but at this very period is reasserting itself with astounding vitality both in this country and abroad. Here I think one can securely find that "unified view of life" upon which to build that Christian criticism of reality which Dr. Hough rightly sees to be the pressing need of today.

EDWARD DAY STEWART

A PHILOSOPHY OF FORM

E. I. Watkin

Sheed & Ward, Inc., New York, 1935, \$3.75

E. I. Watkin is not a new name in philosophical circles. He is well known as the author of *The Philosophy of Mysticism*, and more recently, of *The Bow in the Clouds*. The sub-title of the latter, *An Essay Towards the Integration of Experience*, indicates what Mr. Watkin attempted in the book. In face of the modern confusion and perversion of values, he was searching for a norm according to which the diversified and seemingly unrelated fields of human experience might be properly evaluated and subordinated. He preferred order to chaos, but felt the need of a principle of order, a principle of integration. As the pages of the book unfold it is evident that he

found that principle in a somewhat revised edition of the Scholastic doctrine of matter and form. Form is the externalization of the Divine Ideas, and, in turn, the means of manifesting those Ideas to man. It is the forms of things that determine the metaphysical order of being, and on that order depends, or should depend, the entire order of human life, for the order of being is the order of value and the order of value should, in turn, be the order of choice. Hence, form is the norm for values in the ontological realm, establishing, too, a hierarchy in all phases of human experience. Contemplation and concrete union are the means whereby man experiences the ascending grades of reality. It is the proper use and correlation of these two, Mr. Watkin thinks, that is the real integrating principle for all our varied experience.

The treatment of this view of life in *The Bow in the Clouds* is tantalizingly suggestive, but very sketchy and, in some places, not very clear. Hence we were more than glad to see the appearance of Mr. Watkin's new book, *A Philosophy of Form*, in the preface of which he states that his "present volume is intended to be the development of a philosophy summarily outlined in the *Bow*." The points upon which he enlarges are central to his whole philosophy: matter and form, contemplation, and its various forms—the speculative, aesthetic, axiological (which has to do with the proper evaluation of being dependent on form), and religious.

To those of us who lean towards the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition in philosophy some of Mr. Watkin's doctrines are apt to come as somewhat of a shock; for example, his spiritual matter in the soul, the doctrine of the separately existing universal forms, and perhaps most of all, his intuitionist theory of knowledge. But his work is not to be criticized solely because he does depart from the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. There is much in any theory of cognition that ever remains mysterious. If we are Augustinian and "Wustian" minded we can, for the greater part, go the full way with Mr. Watkin; but even if we prefer the Thomistic school of thought there is still much that will be stimulating and enlightening in *A Philosophy of Form*, especially in the chapters on Matter and Form, and on Aesthetic Contemplation.

As to Mr. Watkin's admitted eclecticism, there is nothing more beneficial to the healthy growth of thought than a critical and assimilative eclecticism. Who, in the better sense of the term, was more eclectic than St. Thomas himself? Nor did men stop thinking when Aquinas died. If Scholasticism is to remain the vital thing it should be, it must be constantly re-thought in the light of the newly discovered truth of succeeding ages. Mr. Watkin is to be congratulated for his attempt to incorporate into his synthesis "whatever seemed to him to be true" in the thought of the moderns as well as in that of the ancients. We are not sure, however, that what seemed to him to be true is always so, nor do we recommend his book without qualification. Still there is room for deep thought and much writing on the contents of *A Philosophy of Form*.

MAURICE B. MCNAMEE

THE SCIENCE OF CORRECT THINKING

Celestine N. Bittle, O. M. Cap.

The Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee, 1935, \$2.00

The present volume is a welcome addition to the many existing texts on logic because of its clearness of exposition and the abundance of illustrative material. Its contents offer nothing new, as is to be expected in a subject which has been treated by major and minor philosophers ever since the time of Aristotle. In method it follows the traditional lines of Scholastic philosophy without its often complained of dryness and jejuneness.

On account of the numerous and practical illustrations it is particularly well adapted for private study. For classroom use

this very redundancy of examples seems to be a hindrance rather than a help. Suggestive questions stimulating the student to find appropriate applications for himself would serve the purpose better. For the same reason it might have been better had the important paragraphs been set off in heavy type rather than italics. As it is, the pages look too uniform and fail to impress the leading ideas at a glance. A more distinctive typographical arrangement would enable the student to make the summaries himself instead of having them given to him ready-made at the end of the chapters. On the whole, this failure of provoking self-activity in the student appears to the writer as the one defect in an otherwise excellent book.

For self-instruction, the easy style, the broad orderly flow of thought, the pithy summaries, and also the occasional excursions into epistemology should render the book both attractive and instructive. The glossary at the end as well as the index are a splendid help to the beginner in philosophy.

J. JOSEPH HORST

THREE INTERPRETATIONS OF THE UNIVERSE and

GOD: A COSMIC PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

John Elof Boodin

The Macmillan Company, New York, 1934, \$5.00

These two volumes on God and Creation form a substantial addition to Professor Boodin's philosophy. *A Realistic Universe* and *Cosmic Evolution* won for him a reputation surely to be increased by these latest works. The first is a historical treatment which includes a survey of Preformation, Emergence, and Creation as these doctrines were held throughout the ages by various philosophers. The second work is a poetically Platonic utterance of personal religious opinions much in vogue among scientists and philosophers of the present time.

In his selection of persons to be presented, the author shows a wide tolerance by choosing figures from the hitherto slightly treated medieval scene. He does not present these, however, with as great a clearness and as sincere a sympathy as he shows when recounting the findings and opinions of contemporary science and philosophy. The reason is to be found in his own statement that he began to understand Plato only when he was thinking along the same lines as the Greek sage. Hence, a medieval scholar who has entered fully into the spirit of St. Augustine and Scotus Erigena would find many bones of contention in Professor Boodin's presentation of these philosophers. He was unhappy enough to choose Henry Bett, who likewise has failed to appreciate the spirit of Erigena, as his secondary source for that thinker.

Both in his first and second book, a theologian will discover many inaccuracies of interpretation of St. Thomas, St. Paul, the Mystics, and the Christian tradition in the Catholic Church. A master of apologetics, moreover, will disagree quite decidedly with some of the sweeping generalizations made without proof or foundation in fact just as a Scholastic philosopher will deplore his indiscriminate use of theological and philosophical knowledge without the careful distinction insisted upon in purely philosophical discussions.

His work on the idea of the deity is one step beyond Samuel Alexander and other self-styled theological writers. The thought is mostly Platonic, and the imagery drawn from modern science seems to favor the gradual departure from the materialistic pantheism so prevalent today. It is unlikely that Professor Boodin will allow this to be his final statement on so vital a question since the book is replete with inconsistencies. It is, moreover, too vague on critical issues, and evidences that he has yet to free himself from the Victorian frame of mind he so heartily scorns.

ALBERT S. FOLEY